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POMA, MARICOPA, AND APACHE BASKETS

ART OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

The southwestern barbarian is an artist. Though a member of the primeval school, his talents and accomplishments are far from mean. If his works are not generally appreciated, as was lately pointed out by a Western writer, it is because they are not generally understood. One needs but the key to learn that it contains all the elements of true art. In it are found beauty, grace, harmony, ideality, pathos, sublimity, picturesqueness, fitness, order, proportion—and in addition to these, the bizarre, the weird, and the mysterious.

The art of the American Indian is manifest principally in the decorative. He lacks most of anything variety in methods of expressing his æsthetic ideas. His highest attainment in æsthetic expression is in form. His pottery and baskets have been shaped in the most artistic of designs. In color, circumstances have limited him, and his combinations and blending have favored the bizarre rather than the delicate and harmonious.

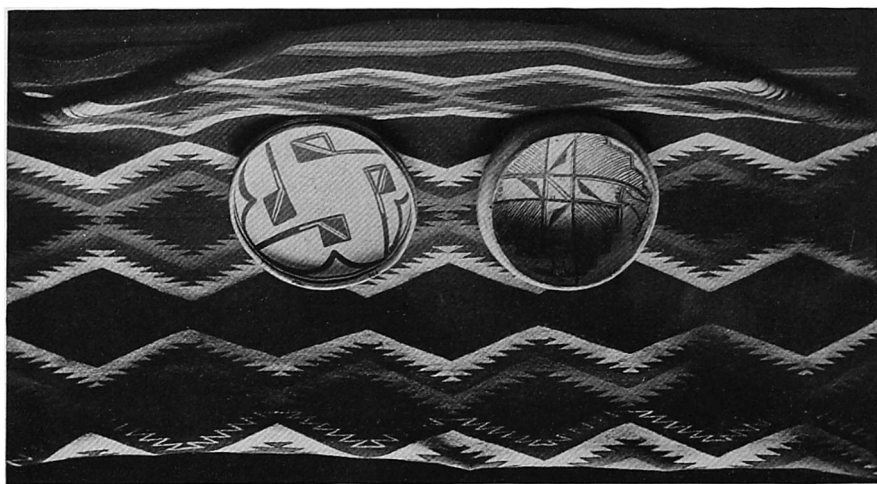
In the shape and designs of baskets, of pottery, of utensils, and other articles in stone; in the decorations upon pottery; in color scheme in these decorations; in the color and patterns in blankets and other woven articles; in color, design, and construction of bead-work; in ornamentation of wearing apparel; in rock painting and rock carving; in inlaid work; in shell carving and shell combinations; in shaping of silver ornaments and jewelry of other metals and materials; in the cutting of turquoise and other gem stones, are found the chief expressions of the artistic nature of the Indians of the West.

As has been remarked, one needs the key to the art of the red man to fully appreciate it. One may view an olla or a basket and admire, in a casual way, its graceful contour, its peculiar coloring, its odd designs, and turn away with but a slight thrill of pleasure. Let the maker of that article interpret the significance of those colors, pattern, and shape, and he has found a feast for his soul. There are poems, histories, and creeds woven into every Indian basket and

imprinted upon every decorated piece of pottery. Those curious figures are trying to tell you a story. The shape of the vessel or basket tells, when one has the key, for what purpose it was created, whether it was designed for the household, for sacred use—and if for the latter, for what particular deity or occasion—or to be the repository of the jewels and precious belongings of its possessor. The colors even tell stories of their own.

The Indians' designs are very expressive. A few lines signify a great deal. A horizontal line with a half circle arching over it may mean: "There came a great flood and it spread all over the land." Then an upward curving line, with three short perpendicular lines resting therein, will tell that: "Three of our ancestors escaped the flood in a big canoe and were brought safely to land." Colors have three significations when used in decorations, one relating to things, one relative to time, one of direction. In the first relation, red means triumph or success; blue means failure; black signifies death; white stands for happiness or peace. Relative to direction, white stands for east, because the sky grows white in the east at the rising of the sun; blue represents the west, because in that direction are the blue waters of the Pacific; yellow is the symbol of the north, for the light of the morning is yellow in the winter-time, when the sun rises further to the northward; red signifies the south, because that is the region of summer and the red sun.

From this interpretation of color it is easy to calculate what the time significations are: White may stand for the morning, or for the springtime; blue is the evening—the time of the setting sun, or autumn, the season of cerulean skies; yellow is winter, the season of



NAVAJO BLANKET, MOQUI AND PUEBLO POTTERY

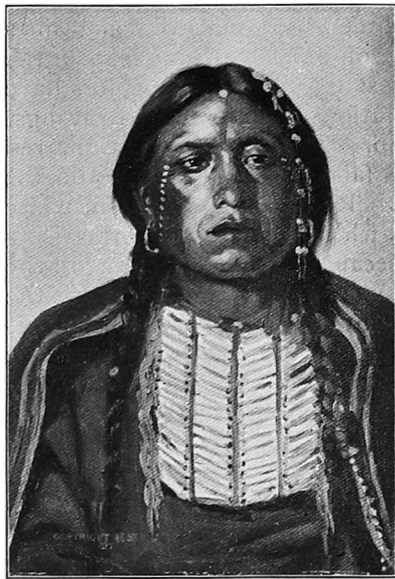
the northern sun, or noon, when the earth is flooded with yellow light; red is the summer, because it symbolizes the land of summer. It is also considered a sacred color, because it is symbolic of blood, the life and strength of man, and the consequent source of his success and achievement.

In many of the baskets of the red man—or rather, the red woman—appear geometrical figures, the production of which requires correct enumeration of the minute stitches or weaves of the pattern, and so

great are the varieties of figures, or parts of figures, each requiring a different enumeration and involving different numbers, that none but accomplished mathematicians could perform the work. Otis T. Mason, curator of the division of ethnology in the National Museum, says:

“A careful study of all women’s work in basketry, as well as weaving and embroidery, reveals the fact that both in the woven and in the sewed, or coil, ware each stitch takes up the very same area of surface. When women invented basketry, therefore, they made art possible. Along with this fact, that each stitch on the same basket made of uniform material occupies the same number of square millimeters, goes one other fact—the most savage women can count.”

The Indian artist works without pattern, model—other than



SOARING EAGLE, PUEBLO
By J. H. Sharp
Showing Personal Adornment

nature—and without rule or compass. The conception of the brain is brought directly to the place it is to occupy. It thus occurs that complications sometimes arise which to the artist of civilization would be fatal to the harmony of his production, but which do not worry the pupils of the primitive school, and which are productive of some extremely artistic results. Quoting again from Mason:

“It would consign a modern potter to retirement if his panels and pictures were not geometrically accurate. But the savage artist seems to relish a symmetry. She is not the least embarrassed if with four repetitions of the same group in mind, she finds, by and by, that three of them have nearly exhausted her space. The quaint manner in which she compels the fourth to squeeze itself into the allotted

area has been the delight, wonder of more than one civilized artist." Rock carving and rock painting is more a thing of the past than of the present. All through California, Arizona, New Mexico, and some parts of Texas are found rock pictures. Some of these are engraved in the rocks and others are painted thereon. In some of the caverns, where the figures are protected from the elements, the colors are as bright to-day as they were when laid on centuries ago.

Some of the rock pictures, it is very interesting to observe, of both the past and the present are more in the line of literature than of art. They are historical records, signboards, maps of localities to show trails and the location of the springs. Others, however, are more in the line of historical and religious paintings, and were evidently the creation of artistic minds wrought principally to satisfy the creative desires of the artist who produced them. War scenes were favorite subjects of the aboriginal artists. Hunting scenes follow next in order, and religious subjects rank next. With some tribes, however, the latter subject ranks first.

The Navajos are particularly fond of picturing their religious ceremonies, and they have a peculiar style of art, by means of which this is done. This is what is termed "dry painting." The

pictures are made in sand—not by marking the outlines upon the sands, but by sprinkling different colored sands on the ground, forming pictures resembling painting. Frederick Dellenbaugh thus describes this method of picture-making:

"All the designs are made with the utmost care and precision, being drawn according to an exact system, except in minor points, where the artist is left to his imagination. So far as is known, the system is not recorded in any way, but depends entirely upon the memory of those in charge. Changes must therefore occur in the course of time. The sand is trailed out of the hand between the thumb and forefinger, and when a mistake is made, it is corrected by renewing, at that point, the surface of the sand which forms the general ground for the work. No less than seventeen ceremonies are illustrated in drawings of this kind."

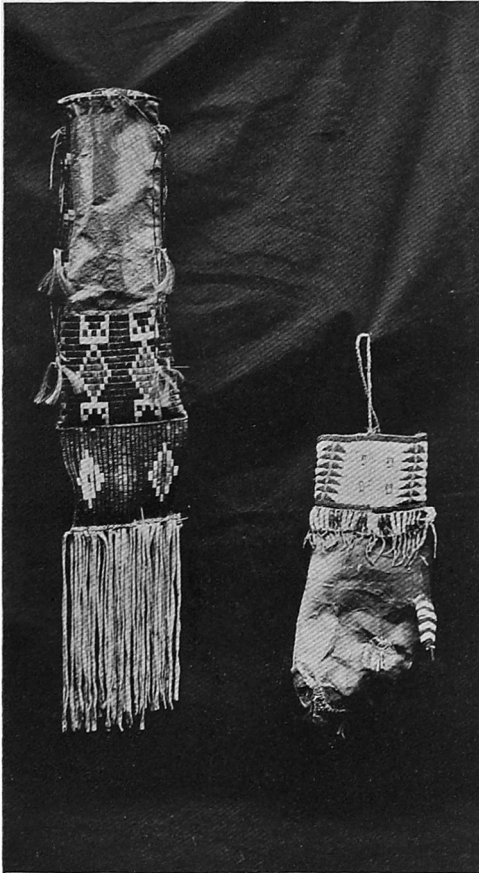


COMING ELK, CHEYENNE

By J. H. Sharp

Showing Personal Adornment

Art as applied to the metals has reached its highest development with the Navajos of Arizona. The Navajo silversmith is exceedingly clever, and he produces a variety of ornaments in both silver and copper which are artistic and unique. Hollow silver beads, carved or engraved discs, engraved buttons, bracelets, brooches, ear-rings,



SIOUX PIPE-CASE AND TOBACCO-POUCH

chains, and numerous other articles are turned out, and are used by members of his own tribe, by various other tribes with whom the Navajos trade and by white folks, who greatly prize this jewelry. Bead-work is an important figure in Indian art, and laying, though not common, is occasionally found, and when found, is seen to be cunningly and artistically wrought. Mojave Indians, the Utes, and some others manufacture clay toys to sell to tourists and to curio collectors. These display art of a doubtful nature, but still art.

In many ways artistic tendencies and artistic skill are displayed by the natives of the wild western country. And the art of this people has not been without its effect upon the art of civilization. It would be a matter of surprise to the world if it could be known to what extent the art of the Indian has influenced the art of civilization.

Both consciously and unconsciously the shapes, designs, and figures of the aboriginal artist have been borrowed and conventionalized by our modern artists, still were the Indianized pieces to be withdrawn, our walls and halls would show innumerable vacant spaces. Certain it is that civilization has borrowed more from the Indian, odd as it may seem, than the Indian has from civilization.

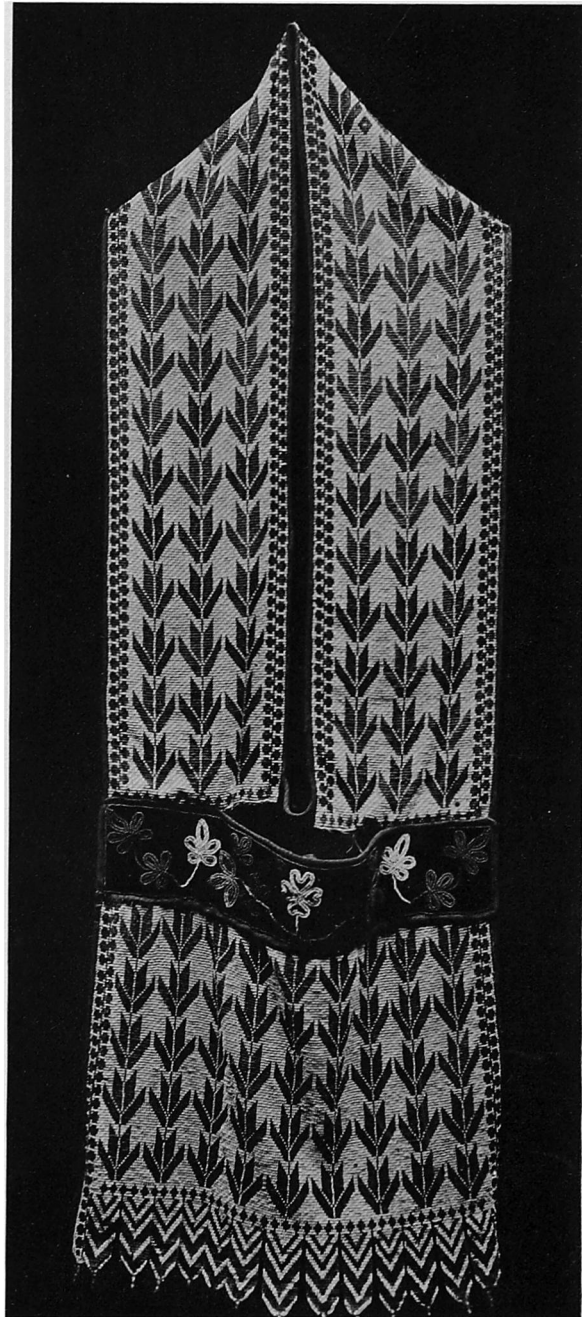
A word may here be said of a spurious development of the



THE BATTERY, NEW YORK
By Carleton T. Chapman

Indians' art work—they have been apt students of their civilized brothers' methods. Indians have learned to make pottery in imitation of prehistoric specimens, and are selling it at a large profit. Idols and household articles supposed to have been dug among the homes of cliff-dwellers of pre-Columbian days, are made to order by the carload in Arizona and New Mexico. Vases that connoisseurs prize as masterpieces of America's first potters, who lived before a Montezuma sat upon the Aztec throne, are fashioned in half a dozen pueblos. Cracked specimens of plastic art, ascribed to aborigines before the dawn of the Christian era, are made almost daily by Pueblo Indians. Mortars and pestles with a counterfeit grime are chiseled and wrought for the white man's collection of antiquities.

Maricopa and Hualipi Indians on the desert wastes of Arizona, create and



CHIPPEWA MEDICINE BAG



CHIPPEWA MOCCASINS

The Apaches found their ancient war weapons were in good demand by buyers for curio stores. Forthwith, the manufacture of old war clubs began. The Hualipis were told of the money there was in making these crude aboriginal weapons. After a while the Hualipis also had for market still older carved clubs, which were said to have been dug among the ruins of the Toltec Pompeiis of the Arizona deserts.

Indian æstheticism has progressed little since recorded history began, so it is not difficult for a modern to imitate the art of ancestors. With a little instruction from traders and curio dealers the Indians have learned how best to win the eyes of the tourist public—and make the most luring counterfeits of various kinds of ancient articles.

The Pueblo Indians are

sell ragged remnants of grass woven sandals, bucklers, and buckskin moccasins and leggings as exhumed relics of a race that lived in walled towers throughout the Salt River Valley. Grotesque effigies in proportioned jars, crazy implements of the chase, strangely painted war clubs, and urns and children's toys, in all the crudity of the primitive savages, are regularly manufactured by squaws for curio dealers.

The prehistoric relic industry has come to be a thriving one in almost every Indian community in Arizona and New Mexico. The Zunis were pioneers in the prehistoric-pottery business. The news of their profits spread to Acoma, Laguna, Isleta, and to the little pueblos along the Rio Grande and about Santa Fe, and started a wholesale business.

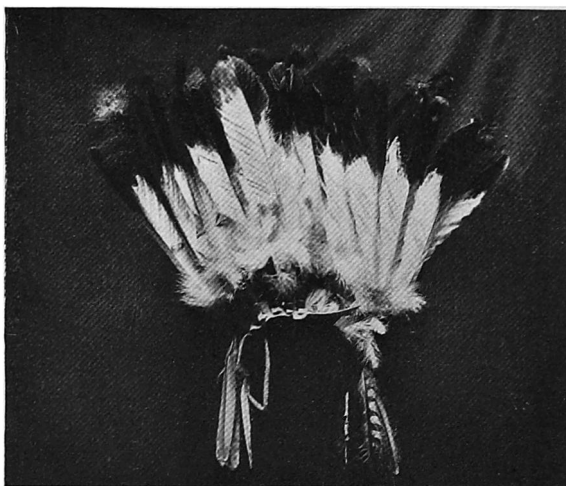
As the industry has grown it has broadened in scope.



INDIAN ART WORK

especially artful in the manufacture of articles from clay that have the stamp of age and will bear scrutiny. The Pueblos have many tricks in pottery that they keep secret. With smoky fires the grime of ages is put on a vase made yesterday. Burial for a few weeks in damp soil gives a musky color to a clay effigy that some squaw molded last week. Chipping away the rude edges of a bowl gives the appearance of use in early American homes.

ADAPTED FOR BRUSH AND PENCIL.



SIoux WAR BONNET

SWEDISH ART AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

The Holland section at the World's Fair was interesting for its unity, the Swedish section for its variety. The Holland paintings attracted in their homeliness and gray harmonies, the Swedish captivated through their colorful strength, brilliant skies, clear atmosphere, and their picturesque themes. Moving water, a rushing stream, sunkissed snow, light, and life—the Swedes do these effects beyond compare. A piece by Bruno Andreas Liljefors, one in an entire room devoted to the work of this notable painter, will never be understood unless you have seen a sheet of clear water upon a clear day, seen it when a brisk breeze is beginning to stir up the whitecaps. Then the lake or bay becomes a deep, intense, and brilliant blue—all in a tremble, and shot with the gleaming white tips of the wavelets. If you know this effect you will know that the Swedish painter had achieved a result which you would have sworn was impossible to the brush. The movement of the water, that trembling shimmer, and the richness of the color were rendered. It was a wonderful picture.

The Swedes are nothing if not daring. A canvas by Carl Johanssen was another miracle, though of a wholly different kind. To venture upon panoramic themes is dangerous. Most of us, no doubt, have stood upon some hilltop at sunset and looked down into a valley. Far away one low range of mountains has hemmed in the horizon, and in the middle distance a lake or bit of stream has reflected the glories of a gorgeous sky. But when the painter attempts to interpret the grandeur and magnificence of such a scene, almost



SIoux VEST AND LEGGINGS

always we are compelled to think that he has failed. The Johanssen picture was a success. There is a moment during such a sunset when the water seems to catch up the reflected rays, to magnify them; to mirror living fire. The moment passes, the lake becomes leaden, the light dies. Johanssen knew the moment, doubtless painted the effect at the instant in an original sketch. Then, in the studio, when he did his picture, he preserved the dashing manner, and probably only worked out his sketch on a larger scale. Here, too, was one of the wonders of the galleries.

One found marvelous effects at every turn in this section. Olof Arborelius, a painter of Stockholm, had eight canvases, three of

which recur to mind. The first depicts a shallow stream at a bend in its course. The day is bright and clear, the water as transparent as fine glass, and the transparency is painted beautifully. The second was called "Evening in the Wilderness," and it presented a wind-torn, desolate landscape. It might be a little confusing in its composition, but it thrilled with sentiment. The third showed a quiet bit of a river, and through trees one caught a glimpse of a reddish boat-house. Foliage and water are not easy to paint, especially when the leaves are brilliant green, as upon a cool, summer day. But this picture surmounted the difficulties.

Anshelm Schulzberg, who, it happens, was the Swedish art commissioner to the



CHIPPEWA MOCCASINS

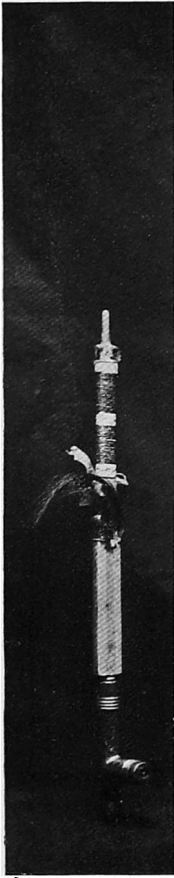


INDIAN ART WORK

Fair,
paints

snow as effectively as his confrères their respective themes. His "Sunny Winter Day" is worthy of comment. In the shadows cast by the drifts, you felt intense coldness—that clear, steel-blue bespeaking the iced atmosphere that cuts at the lungs like a knife. Where the sun fell a thin pinkish tint enlivened the outlook. A splendid canvas, reminder of Thaulow, whose pictures are familiar in the United States.

Many other of these Swedish landscapes and waterscapes had qualities as remarkable as those described in the several mentioned. Ankarcrona exhibited one delightful picture, "Between the Bluffs." K. A. Borgh of Stockholm was among the strongest men of them all. Gottfrid Samuel Nikolaus Kallstenius—they are sufficiently named, some of them—showed seven canvases.

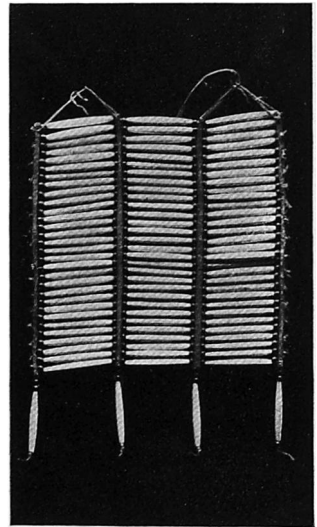


SIOUX PIPE

One, "The Evening Star," will be recalled. Its theme was a long reach of water, wooded by a promontory which runs far out into the bay. From the viewpoint chosen by the artist, sky and water met at the horizon, and the distance was excellently conveyed, emphasized as you followed the edge of the land back into the foreground. It was a dead calm, not a cloud was in the sky. The deep and darkening blue of the evening sky was mirrored by the water. Not a sound, not a ripple—perfect quiet and vast distances—solemn beauty.

Carl Larrson, Emil Osterman, and Anders Zorn formed an interesting trio among the Swedish figure-painters. They possess the vigorous qualities of the landscape men, and yet each is intensely individual, so much so that the relationship between them becomes a little obscure. Larrson and Zorn divided a room. The one inclines wholly toward decorative effects in arrangements and in color. The other does all his work with vim and dash, in big brush strokes, which achieve either a very good or very bad result. Larrson is uniform, Zorn is never so. Both are extremists.

Emil Osterman surely is among the very foremost of contemporary portrait-painters. He approaches his subject with more thoughtfulness, with a more cautious though with fully as confident a brush as Zorn. His "Portrait of the Landscape-Painter J.," in the firmness of the face, the solidity of the figure, in its completeness, is a painting of the very first rank among the pictures exhibited. It is not done too carefully, however. It is freely and broadly painted, though the freedom does not run to reckless dash, as with Zorn. It is a splendid portrait, though not so fine a picture as the Lenbach Bismarck or the Whistler in the American section. There is no impression conveyed of a deep study of the subject as in the Bismarck, nor is there the careful consideration of harmonies which is in the Whistler. One finds even



SIOUX BREASTPLATE

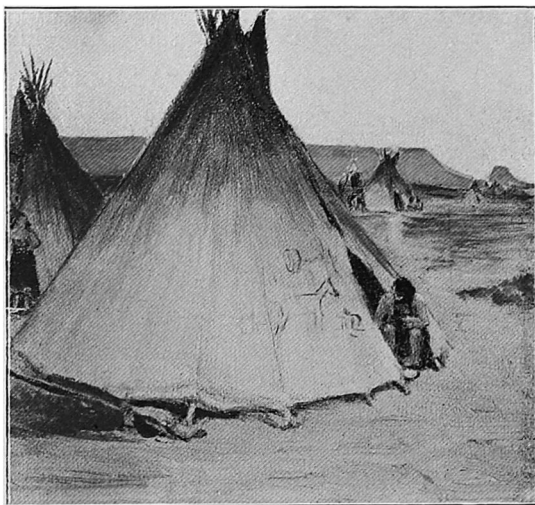


HE-SEE-O, A ZUNI BELLE
By E. A. Burbank
Showing Example of Pottery

an inharmonious note or two. The face is the only light spot upon a dark ground. Its relief is so marked that the possibility that it might be detached strikes one as a little too obvious.

Still, criticism is not the object in this writing. Differences in style and perceptions are the life of a gallery, and to know the differences educates catholicity in taste. If all good painters painted alike, we would see one and then save the exertion of going farther. Moreover, a closer appreciation of the harmonies appeared in other of the Osterman portraits. The one of them may seem to be half-finished, but as you think, you will realize that it is better so, for a fine and an accidental tonal relation between the color of the virgin canvas and the painted surface has been found and preserved.

Zorn we all know so well that it seems almost useless to talk of him. Still, it is difficult to avoid talking of him; he is an artist who contributes endless material for conversation. He exhibited five portraits which were done in America—three of men and two of women.



INDIAN TEPEE, SHOWING DECORATIONS

Needless to say, those of the women were, beyond words, bad. They were bad because he simply massacres feminine character. The one of his subjects might have been interpreted as the type of young American matron. But, with a brutal handling and a haphazard study of the face, he succeeded in rendering and emphasizing every disagreeable suggestion which was possible to her features.

However, depth of perception probably cannot be expected of this man, who outdoes in dash all the dashing Swedes. When one sails in, hit or miss, it is logical that he should miss occasionally; and certainly he is as likely to hit the bad as the good points of a subject. And Zorn, in his shallow way, ever finds the undesirable suggestion in his studies of women. His nudes are positively indecent.

As it requires such extravagant language to define him at his worst, it needs terms fully as strong to define him at his best. His "Portrait of Doctor Warner" had every quality which we could admire. It was a lifelike, vigorous, powerful painting. In departing